

## Notice of Exemption

Fee Exempt per Government Code Section 6103

**To:** Office of Planning and Research  
P.O. Box 3044, Room 113  
Sacramento, CA 95812-3044

**From:** California Department of Water Resources  
San Luis Field Division, 31770 Gonzaga Road  
Gustine, CA 95322-9737

**Lead Agency:** California Department of Water Resources

**Project Title:** California Aqueduct Reaches 3 and 4 Vegetation and Burrow Removal

**Project Location City & County:** Merced County and Fresno County

**Project Location – Specific:** Work will take place on the right side (R) of the California Aqueduct (Aqueduct) from mileposts (MPs) 82.50 to 83.00, 97.00 to 97.20, and 97.40 to 99.00 and on the left side (L) of the Aqueduct from MPs 76.78 to 79.53, 81.50 to 83.90, and 96.90 to 97.00. These MPs are in Reach 3 and Reach 4 of the Aqueduct. The northernmost portion of the work site (MP 76.78) is where the Aqueduct and Volta Road intersect, and the southernmost portion of the work site (MP 99.00) is about 1.55 miles northwest of the intersection of the Aqueduct and West Shields Avenue.

**Description of Nature, Purpose, and Beneficiaries of Project:** Trees, brush, shrubs, woody debris, and trash will be removed by hand by the California Conservation Corps (CCC) in the DWR right-of-way. The removed vegetation and woody debris will be chipped and scattered on the road shoulders. If the vegetation or woody debris cannot be chipped, it will be piled and burned following the San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control Board requirements. Stumps left in the ground will be treated with herbicide to prevent future growth. Any removed trash will be disposed of at an appropriate offsite location. All observed burrows will be collapsed and compacted by using hand tools. Vegetation and burrow removal is necessary to maintain the structural integrity of the Aqueduct; woody debris and trash removal allows for unobstructed inspections and maintenance of the Aqueduct. The State Water Project will benefit.

### Exempt/Suspend Status:

- Ministerial (§21080[b][1]; 15268)
- Declared Emergency (Proclamation of a State of Emergency Due to Drought)
- Emergency Project (Public Resources Code §21080[b][4]; California Code of Regulations §15269[c])
- Categorical Exemption: 15301 (Existing Facilities) and 15304 (Minor Alterations to Land)
- Statutory Exemptions:

**Reasons Why Project Is Exempt:** Work consists of removing vegetation, burrows, and trash from the DWR right of way. No healthy, mature, scenic trees will be removed and there will be no expansion of existing or former use of the Aqueduct right-of-way. Categorical Exemptions 15301 (Existing Facilities) and 15304 (Minor Alterations to Land) apply.

**Name of Public Agency Approving Project:** California Department of Water Resources

**Contact Person:** Mark McDaniel

**Telephone:** (209) 827-5190

**Signature:** Mark McDaniel **Date:** 2/4/2025 **Title:** Planner/Scheduler/UC Supv.

Signed by Lead Agency

Signed by Applicant